

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An optical interface using indicator lights is provided for an appliance having a vacuum fluorescent display (VFD) by mounting the indicator lights behind a VFD. In a VFD having a dark background, apertures are formed in the VFD so the indicator lights are enabled for optical communication through the VFD. Preferably, the apertures are formed in the dark layer covering a glass substrate in the VFD so the dark layer helps absorb reflected light that may cause optical noise in the light signals being communicated. Each aperture may be located equidistantly from a group of four pixels in the VFD.